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ABSTRACT

To provide information about changing educational and vocational opportunities for students from small, rural North Dakota secondary schools, a Career Development Institute was established at the North Dakota State School of Science. The purpose of the Institute was to broaden students' knowledge of the opportunities available to them in the world of work. Participants of the Institute's first four years (1970-1973) were surveyed for their ratings of the career development program. Data and findings are presented under three major headings: students (214 responding), parents (165 responding), and schools (163 surveyed). Students indicated that the Institute was helpful in choosing a career, that they learned of new career areas, and that the Institute program would be beneficial for all high school students. Survey responses from parents and schools also indicated that the Institute appeared to be an effective way to broaden knowledge of career opportunities and to help students plan educational programs to fit their career plans. The survey instruments, tabulated responses to the surveys, and comments from parents and schools are appended. (MF)

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RESEARCH SERIES NO. 14

A SURVEY OF THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE EXPLORATORY PROGRAM FOR INVESTIGATING TRAINING IN A CLUSTER OF VOCATIONAL OCCUPATIONS

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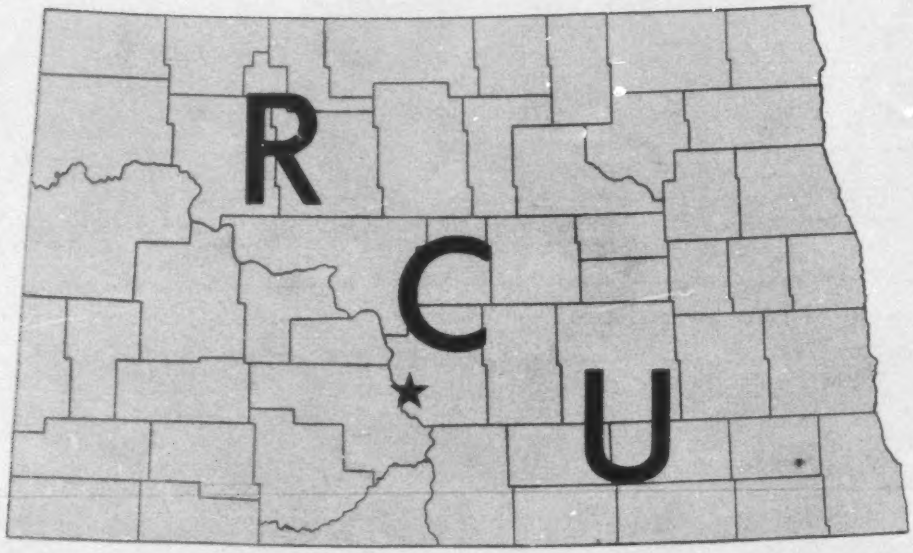

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A SURVEY OF THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE EXPLORATORY PROGRAM FOR INVESTIGATING TRAINING IN A CLUSTER OF VOCATIONAL OCCUPATIONS

Research Report 14

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In cooperation with the North Dakota Research Coordinating Unit. Funded under Part C 131(b) of Vocational Education Act.

April, 1975

(VT 102 141)

A SURVEY OF THE

CAREER DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

EXPLORATORY PROGRAM FOR INVESTIGATING TRAINING

IN A CLUSTER OF VOCATIONAL OCCUPATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Never before has the pace of technological change been so rapid. Occupations become temporary, transitory or even obsolete. These changes have markedly affected the programs of our educational institutions. In many cases small, rural school districts have not been able to keep up with these rapid changes of educational opportunities that must be made available to all North Dakota secondary school students, nor have the districts been able to finance these changes. Consequently, the North Dakota Department of Vocational Education requested that the North Dakota State School of Science develop a program that would acquaint high school juniors and seniors with the broadened areas of vocational opportunities. Hence, the Career Development Institute at the North Dakota State School of Science.

The purpose of the Institute was to broaden students' knowledge of the opportunities available to them in the world of work. We hoped to accomplish this by allowing students to explore 25 different vocational areas. Much of the time was spent with hands-on-job experience.

Most of the students who participated in the CDI were from North Dakota schools that have limited vocational education programs. Then too, many of these students had few, if any, opportunities to visit a business or industry of any size. In most communities the school is the largest enterprise, offering basically academic programs.

After the fifth year of the CDI, the Department of Vocational Education requested the college survey the participants of the first four years

(1970 - 73). The 1974 Career Development Institute participants were not surveyed because the majority were still in high school. In January of 1975, then, the students who had participated in the Career Development Institute, their parents, and the high schools which the students attended were surveyed by way of a questionnaire and letter. Data and information acquired from the questionnaires have been analyzed and presented in several tables. The findings are presented under three major headings: students, parents, and schools.

STUDENTS

Of the five hundred fourteen students surveyed, two hundred fourteen responded, for a 42% return. Samples of the letter and questionnaire used are found on pages 2 and 3 of the appendix. Table II contains the calculated means for student ratings on questions one through five pertaining to their CDI experience.

In question one, the mean tended to be high for both males and females indicating that the CDI was helpful in choosing a career. Females tended to rate the question higher than the males.

One of the main objectives of this program was to acquaint students with new vocational career areas. The high rating of question two certainly indicates success of this main objective.

Results of questions three and four indicate that the CDI strengthened a career choice already made, more than it caused students to reevaluate and change a career choice. It seemed to be more of a reenforcing factor for females than it was for males.

Almost all the students felt that the CDI would be beneficial for all high school students. This is indicated by the high rating of question five.

Table III contains the frequency and percentage of student responses to questions six through nine pertaining to their CDI experience. Question six indicates slightly less than half the students chose a career from the areas previewed during the CDI. Although a majority of areas previewed are generally considered "traditional male occupations" a higher percentage of females chose a career from the areas previewed. This suggests that females are considering occupations formerly thought of as the purview of the male.

Over half of the CDI students indicated they continued their education as a result of their participation in the institute. The majority of those still in high school and others who have not yet attended a post-secondary school indicated they plan to further their education.

Although only 25% of CDI students are now employed in an area previewed, the survey indicated that the majority are in college or plan to attend.

Table IV lists the various career areas in which students are now employed.

DISCUSSION

The survey indicated that the CDI was successful in assisting students in choosing a career, and highly successful in acquainting students with new career areas, which was the main objective of the institute.

Although the CDI was a factor in strengthening a career choice or causing a change in choice, it did not appear to be a decisive factor.

Since the main objective of the CDI was to acquaint students with career areas, much of the information and experience acquired was general and basic. Because of this broad overview of the CDI, the institute was not a decisive factor in strengthening a specific career choice or causing a reevaluation and change of a career choice.

A higher percentage of students reported that the CDI would be beneficial to all students than reported that it helped them in making a career choice. This can be attributed to several factors. For many students it was their first time away from home and they found this freedom beneficial to personal growth. They also found beneficial the experience of meeting high school students from other communities, the dormitory living, and the freedom of the atmosphere. The students especially liked the adult structure of the CDI compared to the rigidity of their high school. For these reasons they thought all high school students could benefit from this type of educational and personal development.

PARENTS

In January 1975 326 parents of the CDI students from the years 1970-73 were mailed a cover letter and a questionnaire concerning their attitude about their son's or daughter's experience in the institute. One hundred sixty five responses were received for a return of 51%. Samples of the letter and questionnaire are found on pages 7 and 8 of the appendix. Table V contains the mean and percentages of parent responses to survey questions.

Apparently the parents felt that the CDI helped their son or daughter in their career decision because they rated question one quite high.

Nearly all parents (95%) thought the CDI was an effective way of presenting vocational occupations.

During the fifth year of the CDI, sophomores through seniors were allowed to attend the institute. However, two thirds of the parents surveyed felt that only juniors and seniors should participate in this type of institute.

DISCUSSION

From a parent's point of view, the CDI appeared to be an effective way to broaden knowledge of career opportunities. The parents' responses indicated their understanding of their children's need for more vocational information and hands-on experience in order to make a better career decision. The parents were also aware that small high schools are not always able to provide hands-on experience and the CDI is an effective means of filling this gap in their children's education.

SCHOOLS

In January 1975 one hundred sixty three schools were mailed a cover letter and questionnaire concerning their students who participated in the CDI. The cover letter was addressed to the high school principal or counselor. Samples of this letter and questionnaire are found on pages 10 and 11 of the appendix. Table VI contains the mean and percentages of school responses to questions.

Principals and counselors indicated that the CDI is an effective means of helping their students make educational programs fit their career plans. Almost all these educators (96%) thought the CDI was an effective way to present vocational careers. The majority of respondents felt that having students participate in the CDI benefited their school.

DISCUSSION

These educators in general feel this was an effective method of facilitating the students' career development. Many commented that their job as educator was made easier, since students returned with a more mature approach to school. Most of the students were anxious to share their experience and knowledge with other high school students. Some counselors commented that

their usefulness as a counselor was more appreciated. Some reported that the student enthusiasm inspired other teachers to talk more about careers in their classrooms. Students also became more aware of how their high school programs tied in with their future occupations.

CONCLUSIONS

The objective of the Career Development Institute was to broaden students' knowledge of career areas, especially those students from high schools where hands-on job experience was not available. Based on the ratings of the survey, the students did gain a better understanding of vocational opportunities open to them. The parents support this conclusion by reporting that they thought the CDI was an effective means of exposing students to the world of work. Likewise, educators thought the CDI was effective in presenting vocational careers.

Both students and parents then indicated that the CDI was helpful to the students in their career decision-making. Moreover, educators found that students who attended the CDI gave more thought to their education planning. In conclusion, the results of the survey support the need for this type of career exploratory program.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Table I
Percentage of Questionnaires Returned by Particpants in the Career Development Institute Survey..... 1

Cover Letter Sent to Student Participants..... 2

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Table II
Means for Student Ratings on Questions One Through Five Pertaining to Their CDI Experience..... 4

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School Survey Questions..... 11

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Mean and Percentages of School Responses to Questions Concerning the Career Development Institute..... 12

Comments from the Parent Survey..... 13

Comments from the School Survey..... 14

TABLE I

PERCENTAGE OF QUESTIONNAIRES
RETURNED BY PARTICIPANTS
IN THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTE SURVEY

Participant Group	Mailed	Returned	Percentage of Questionnaires Returned
Students	514	214	42%
Parents	326	165	51%
Schools	163	70	43%
TOTAL	1003	449	45%

1

Dear Participant:

The Career Development Institute which started as an exemplary program funded by the North Dakota State Board for Vocational Education is going on its fifth year. One important part of this Institute is to find out what happened to the participants.

To accomplish this purpose, I have enclosed with this letter a survey questionnaire which I would like you to complete. The information which you volunteer is confidential and in no way will you or your responses be identified individually. For the purpose of presenting data from this survey, your responses will be combined with the responses of other Institute participants and then presented in a very general manner.

This program has provided many high school students an opportunity to have some hands on job experience in a number of careers before making a decision on a vocational choice.

We certainly hope that your experience as a participant was a positive factor in determining your vocational choice.

We hope that you will take the time to complete the survey and return it to us immediately in the self-addressed envelope.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rich Hauck

Rich Hauck, Director
Counseling Center
Michael Lenhardt, Counselor

Michael Lenhardt

RH:wkh

Enclosures (2)

2

CAREER DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE
PARTICPANT SURVEY

Directions: Please do not put your name on this survey. All responses are to remain anonymous. Circle the number that best describes your feelings about the Institute.

	not at all				very much
1. To what extent was the Career Development Institute helpful in choosing a career?	1	2	3	4	5
2. To what extent did the program acquaint you with new career areas?	1	2	3	4	5
3. If you had already chosen a career before attending the Career Development Institute, to what extent did this experience strengthen your choice?	1	2	3	4	5
4. If you had already chosen a career before attending the Career Development Institute, to what extent did the experience cause you to reevaluate and change your career choice?	1	2	3	4	5
5. To what extent do you feel a program like the Career Development Institute would be beneficial for all high school students?	1	2	3	4	5

Circle yes or no.

6. As a result of the program, did you choose a career from the areas previewed? Yes No

7. Did you continue formal education at a vocational school or other institution as a result of your experience at the Career Development Institute? Yes No

8. Are you planning to continue formal education at a vocational school or other institution as a result of your experience at the Career Development Institute? Yes No

9. Are you now employed in a career area previewed at the Career Development Institute? Yes No

10. If the above answer is yes, in what area are you employed? _____

If the above answer is no, what are you presently doing? _____

_____

TABLE II

MEANS FOR STUDENT RATINGS* ON QUESTIONS ONE THROUGH FIVE PERTAINING TO THEIR CDI EXPERIENCE

Questions	Males		Females	
	N**	Mean	N**	Mean
1. To what extent was the Career Development Institute helpful in choosing a career?	122	3.42	89	3.65
2. To what extent did the program acquaint you with new career areas?	123	4.00	91	4.25
3. If you had already chosen a career before attending the Career Development Institute, to what extent did this experience strengthen your choice?	109	2.85	78	3.17
4. If you had already chosen a career before attending the Career Development Institute, to what extent did the experience cause you to reevaluate and change your career choice?	109	2.50	76	2.53
5. To what extent do you feel a program like the Career Development Institute would be beneficial for all high school students?	123	4.67	90	4.57

* Ratings were from 1, representing "not at all" to 5, representing "very much."

** N represents the number of respondents.

TABLE II

MEANS FOR STUDENT RATINGS* ON QUESTIONS ONE THROUGH FIVE PERTAINING TO THEIR CDI EXPERIENCE

	Males		Females		Total	
	N**	Mean	N**	Mean	N**	Mean
the Career Development n choosing a career?	122	3.42	89	3.65	211	3.50
the program acquaint areas?	123	4.00	91	4.25	214	4.09
chosen a career before r Development Institute, this experience strengthen	109	2.85	78	3.17	187	2.98
chosen a career before r Development Institute, the experience cause you hange your career choice?	109	2.50	76	2.53	185	2.51
ou feel a program like ent Institute would be high school students?	123	4.67	90	4.57	213	4.62

representing "not at all" to 5, representing "very much."

ber of respondents.

TABLE III

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF STUDENT RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SIX THROUGH NINE PERTAINING TO THEIR CDI EXPERIENCE

Question	Male N*	Male Yes	Male No	Female N*	Female Yes	Female No
6. As a result of the program, did you choose a career from the areas previewed?	122	43%	57%	91	48%	52%
7. Did you continue formal education at a vocational school or other institution as a result of your experience at the Career Development Institute?	122	56%	44%	90	64%	36%
8. Are you planning to continue formal education at a vocational school or other institution as a result of your experience at the Career Development Institute?	112	54%	46%	91	58%	42%
9. Are you now employed in a career area previewed at the Career Development Institute?	120	21%	79%	91	27%	73%

* N represents the number of respondents

TABLE III

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF STUDENT RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SIX THROUGH NINE PERTAINING TO THEIR CDI EXPERIENCE

	Male			Female			Total		
	N*	Yes	No	N*	Yes	No	N*	Yes	No
rogram, did you m the areas	122	43%	57%	91	48%	52%	213	45%	55%
mal education ol or other ult of your reer Develop-	122	56%	44%	90	64%	36%	212	59%	41%
continue formal ional school or a result of your reer Development	112	54%	46%	91	58%	42%	213	54%	46%
in a career area eer Development	120	21%	79%	91	27%	73%	211	24%	76%

er of respondents

TABLE IV

FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION CONCERNING EMPLOYMENT IN AREAS PREVIEWED AT THE CDI

AREAS PREVIEWED	N	OTHER AREAS	N
MALES			
Automotive	17	College	23
Electrical	3	High School	16
Electronics	5	Factory Worker	3
Graphic Arts	3	Farming	8
Machine Tooling	4	Carpenter	3
Surveying/Drafting	2	Business	5
Plumbing	1	Trucking	3
Welding	1	Armed Forces	9
		Unemployed	9
		Miscellaneous	7
FEMALES			
Graphic Arts	4	College	34
Nursing	10	High School	6
Dental	3	Voc-Tech School	2
Food Service	2	Secretary/Clerk	11
Business	4	Housewife	5
		Medical	3
		Miscellaneous	4
		Unemployed	4

* N represents the number employed in each area

Dear Parent:

The Career Development Institute which started as an exemplary program funded by the North Dakota State Board for Vocational Education is going on its fifth year. One important part of this Institute is to find out what happened to the participants.

To accomplish this purpose, I have enclosed with this letter a survey questionnaire which I would like you to complete. The information which you volunteer is confidential and in no way will you or your responses be identified individually. For the purpose of presenting data from this survey, your responses will be combined with the responses of other Institute participants and then presented in a very general manner.

This program has provided many high school students an opportunity to have some hands on job experience in a number of careers before making a decision on a vocational choice.

We certainly hope that you as a parent will take the time to complete the survey and return it to us immediately in the self-addressed envelope.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rich Hauck

Rich Hauck, Director
Counseling Center
Michael Lenhardt, Counselor

Michael Lenhardt

RH:wkh

Enclosures (2)

PARENT SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. To what extent did the Career Development Institute help your son or daughter make a more knowledgeable decision concerning his/her career choice?

not helpful very helpful

1 2 3 4 5

2. As a parent, do you think the Career Development Insitute is an effective way to present vocational occupations? Yes _____ No_____

3. Do you think the Career Development Institute should be offered to students before they reach their junior/senior years of high school? Yes_____ No_____

TABLE V

MEAN AND PERCENTAGES OF PARENT RESPONSES TO SURVEY QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Question	N *	Mean **
1. To what extent did the Career Development Institute help your son or daughter make a more knowledgeable decision concerning his/her career choice?	160	3.83

	N *	Yes	No
2. As a parent, do you think the Career Development Institute is an effective way to present vocational occupations?	161	96%	4%
3. Do you think the Career Development Institute should be offered to students before they reach their junior/senior years of high school?	165	34%	66%

* N represents the number of respondents

** Ratings were from 1, representing "not helpful" to 5, representing "very helpful"

Dear Counselor/Principal:

The Career Development Institute which started as an exemplary program funded by the North Dakota State Board for Vocational Education is going on its fifth year. One important part of this Institute is to find out what happened to the participants.

To accomplish this purpose, I have enclosed with this letter a survey questionnaire which I would like you to complete. The information which you volunteer is confidential and in no way will you or your responses be identified individually. For the purpose of presenting data from this survey, your responses will be combined with the responses of other Institute participants and then presented in a very general manner.

This program has provided many high school students an opportunity to have some hands on job experience in a number of careers before making a decision on a vocational choice.

We certainly hope that you as a counselor/principal will take the time to complete the survey and return it to us immediately in the self-addressed envelope.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rich Hauck

Rich Hauck, Director
Counseling Center
Michael Lenhardt, Counselor

Michael Lenhardt

RH:wkh

Enclosures (2)

10

SCHOOL SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. To what extent did the Career Development Institute help your students' educational career planning?

not helpful very helpful

1 2 3 4 5

2. As an educator, do you think the Career Development Institute is an effective way to present vocational occupations? Yes _____ No _____

3. Has participation in the Career Development Institute by your students benefited the school in any way? Yes _____ No _____

How?_____

_____

_____

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TABLE VI

MEAN AND PERCENTAGES OF SCHOOL RESPONSES
TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Question	N *	Mean **
1. To what extent did the Career Development Institute help your students' educational career planning?	70	3.64

	N*	Yes	No
2. As an educator, do you think the Career Development Institute is an effective way to present vocational occupations?	70	96%	4%
3. Has participation in the Career Development Institute by your students benefited the school in any way?	64	88%	12%

* N represents the number of respondents

** Ratings were from 1, representing "not helpful" to 5, representing "very helpful"

COMMENTS FROM THE PARENT SURVEY

"It is a very good program."

"Our son enjoyed his course at Wahpeton and it helped him decide what he wanted to take up."

"I think this is a good program, especially for students from the smaller schools that are unable to provide some type of vocational training and exposure in vocational areas."

"We should do more of this."

"I believe this should be offered to seniors only. The degree of indecision any time before that is too great."

"Thanks to my daughter's attending the Career Development Institute, she was able to decide what she wanted to do after graduation. She also got the feel of being away at school. I know that helps her this year when she's away from home."

"We have felt this program is much better than the high school career program attempts. In your CDI the kids learn what the different careers might consist of. We are very much in favor of it."

"I believe the Career Development Institute should definitely be offered to sophomores. Sophomores are less likely to be holding summer jobs or have other conflicting interests. I believe it would be most beneficial in this age group. They could also plan their remaining high school classes more effectively if they then had a vocational choice in mind."

"Being away from home was good for them and it made them more independent. Most of the classes were very informative and beneficial."

"As a parent I felt the program was well worthwhile as it gave her a good understanding of other vocational fields which she would not otherwise be able to experience."

"I feel the Career Development Institute should be offered to students before they reach their junior/senior years of high school. Then they could find out what high school subjects are required or would be helpful."

"Although our daughter did not go into any fields offered at your institute, it did prepare her for college life, made her more outgoing and we felt it was a very worthwhile program."

COMMENTS FROM THE SCHOOL SURVEY

"The only criticisms I have heard relate to cost, distance from home and too little time to explore vocational areas."

"The Career Development Institute has provided justification for offering more short work experiences in our vocational courses and for out-of-school work experience opportunities."

"The information relayed to the school gave myself and the student a good base to discuss future plans."

"The students have had an 'in depth' experience that most rural high schools cannot provide for their students."

"The Career Development Institute gave students an insight into vocational education rather than just a 'go to college and get a degree' philosophy."

"Students that attended the institute came back with different goals in mind and as a result they achieved more out of school."

"It has given our students an opportunity to explore different areas and make more valuable and realistic course selections."

"They have brought us some new ideas. Some of these students were better motivated when they returned in the fall."

"It spurs the students to think ahead to their careers and plan for their future years."

"Teachers are becoming more aware and are using career awareness, self-awareness and career education materials in their classrooms."

"It stimulated the development of a junior high summer project for career exploration."

"In counseling with students it has given another avenue for students to explore before making a major decision on their future."

"The Career Development Institute instilled more interest in vocational education."

"It has helped some of the juniors in planning curriculum electives for their senior year."

"It provides students with valuable information as to programs, requirements (financial and academic), securing financial assistances, etc."

"The students come back to school with goals in mind and seem to want to work toward attaining them."

"The students came back more motivated. They set a good example for other students."

"The students receive information that would be very difficult for us to get to them. They also start planning on post-high school activities."

"It has made my role as a counselor more meaningful to students. It has also helped me in doing vocational counseling with those students who have attended the institute. By all means keep the program going."

"Enrollment in shop and mechanical drawing has increased."

"It has opened another avenue in regard to career opportunities. The enthusiasm of students attending has rubbed off on other students."

"Those that attended came back with a greater knowledge of a variety of fields and were more interested in getting information and making decisions. Their experiences were also passed on to many other students. I think the program is great."

"It has given the students an idea of what education is about and also created an interest in making a vocational choice."

"It gives the counselor another alternative in career planning for students, particularly for those most indecisive."

"It provides a supplementation for needs the school cannot supply."

"Students that I talked to that attended the Career Development Institute were very pleased with the activities. They felt it was very helpful in making some career decisions. One student said 'I know I wouldn't want to do that, now I can decide on something else.' Parent feedback was very positive. One mother said 'other parents were calling to see how their son or daughter could attend.' I feel it is a very worthwhile project."

"It helped us see attitude changes in several students. Thus, we adopted more work-study type programs."

"It benefited students in awareness of areas in the world of work, becoming knowledgeable about vocations and careers adapted to individual skills and aptitudes. It made them aware of the importance of selecting careers to satisfy personal needs."